

## **Message from the Chief**

**Chief's Memo – August 10, 2006**

***Major Arson Arrests by CDF Law Enforcement, Governor Visits CDF Redding to Thank Firefighters!***



Not many people in the public recognize and understand the significant law enforcement mission of CDF. Coming from a law enforcement background, as I have, as well as being State Fire Marshal, I truly understand what it takes to successfully investigate, identify, and apprehend criminals for the crime of arson. However, this work is vitally important to public safety and firefighter safety. This week I would like to recognize some of the outstanding law enforcement efforts by CDF personnel in conjunction with our local government partners.

Tehama-Glenn Unit BC David Harp, BC Dale Kinyon, and Fire Captain Specialist Josh White were involved in the investigation and arrest of two suspects who have been charged with arson, use of a destructive device and conspiracy associated with a vehicle arson case. Earlier in the year, from the same Unit, BC Harp, BC Steve Sherman, and Fire Captain Greg Gutierrez were involved in a investigation and arrest of a suspect charged with seven counts of attempted homicide associated with the arson of an occupied structure.

A Shasta Lake City man was arrested by the CDF Arson Investigation Unit on Monday, July 24, 2006. The suspect was arrested in connection with 16 felony counts of arson relating to fires that have occurred in northern Shasta County since 2005. Investigators continue to examine evidence relating to more than 60 fires that have occurred since 2003 to determine if the same suspect can be charged with additional counts. Investigators from the Shasta-Trinity CDF Unit and the City of Redding Fire Department were instrumental in the investigation that led to the arrest. These investigators work closely with the Shasta County District Attorney's Office to investigate and prosecute the crime of arson. This was the second arrest of a serial arsonist by CDF's Arson Investigation Unit in less than a week.

This year 18 roadside vegetation fires were started between June 3 and July 17 in the Morgan Valley area of Contra Costa. A surveillance team of 22 people started an investigation on June 6 to develop a suspect. The team consisted of aerial, mobile and fixed positions. A suspect was identified on July 9. The majority of fires prior to July 17 were nighttime fires. On the morning of July 17 the suspect started a roadside vegetation fire that burned approximately 10

acres. The suspect agreed to talk after he was arrested and ultimately confessed to a total of nine fires dating back to June 7. He has been arraigned and is awaiting a preliminary hearing. An additional thirteen counts should be filed next week.

Some of the personnel listed below were reassigned to the Shasta law enforcement operation, but certainly contributed to the successful outcome of the Contra Costa operation:

Jim Hoffmier IC	NEU	Larry Graff, OPS	MEU
Eric Hoffman Trainee	LNU	Marnie Quigley , FLO	SKU
Josh White	TGU	Chris Valerga	LNU
Jeremy Monroe	HUU	Brian Layne	BTU
Ed Barnes	NEU	Bill Mendonca	NEU
Kay Price	CZU	Garrett Simmons	AEU
Monty Messenger	SKU	Jim Wilson	CNR
Rhett Imperial	HUU	Ron Thomas	Retired
Jim Engle	BTU	Brian Giambrone	SCU
Ed Locke	HUU	Alan Carlson	CNR
Tom Dodd	Kern County	Dean Herzberg	Redding City

Finally, CDF law enforcement, Arson Bomb Investigators, Deputy State Fire Marshals, and local fire and law enforcement agencies recently completed a very successful fireworks enforcement effort. I spoke about these efforts in an earlier memo.

Congratulations to all of the CDF Law Enforcement personnel and our local government partners on outstanding investigative work. This important fire prevention work helps keep the public and our own personnel from facing the dangers associated with arson fires.

Last Friday, Governor Schwarzenegger stopped by CDF in Redding to thank firefighters for their efforts at the "Junction Fire." The Governor met with Incident Command Team 4 and spoke to all the firefighters present who were part of the initial attack on the fire, calling them the "real action heroes." He then had a sack lunch with the troops and spent time informally thanking everyone involved in saving the City of Weaverville from a fast moving wildfire. See the photos below. You can read more about the Governor's visit to Redding by clicking [here](#).

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Ken McLean as the Deputy Director of Fire Protection. Ken has been doing a great job filling in for Jim Wright, who recently retired. Ken is a demonstrated leader with outstanding communication skills. He is a team player, has an analytical style, and is an

experienced decision-maker. Please feel free to extend your congratulations to him.

Finally, on a sad note, on Friday, August 4 the Forest Service lost two of its contract employees during air operations over the Happy Camp Complex fires on the Klamath National Forest. The two firefighters were the pilot and copilot of a Sikorsky Sky Crane Type 1 helicopter that crashed in the Klamath River. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the US Forest Service and the families and friends of the pilots.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ruben Grijalva'.

Ruben Grijalva, Chief  
Director / State Fire Marshal

#### **Photos from the Governor's Visit to CDF Redding**





### **Fire Protection**

The California All Incident Reporting System (CAIRS) has gone 'live' in the Tehama-Glenn Unit. All information is flowing successfully to the CAIRS data warehouse. This pilot testing will be conducted for two weeks. Fire Protection and IT will monitor the data to make sure there are no problems. FP will be training the TCU (Tuolumne-Calaveras) personnel next week to also be a pilot-test unit. Regional training begins on Tuesday, August 29th.

**OSFM**

Fire and Life Safety staff recently interviewed 35 applicants for upcoming positions as Deputy State Fire Marshal. That list will remain active until further notice.

Fire and Life Safety staff will be meeting with the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation staff to explore how they can safely add 18,000 beds to their existing, already crowded, facilities.

State Fire Training held a workshop in Riverside to involve stakeholders in planning and updating fire training of the future. Approximately 40 participants broke into working groups and prioritized their concerns about the current program, developed strategy about what needs to be done, and contributed to the strategic plan that is currently being developed.